

**Twenty-Seventh Annual Report**

**Maryland State Board**

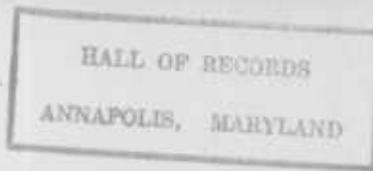
of

**Motion Picture Censors**



**1942-1943**

**Offices**  
**848 NORTH HOWARD STREET**  
**Baltimore, Maryland**



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## TWENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

# MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS

1942 - 1943



BENJAMIN HANCE  
Chairman

ANNIE E. ELLIOTT  
Vice-Chairman and Treasurer

HELEN C. TINGLEY  
Secretary



HELEN L. ODOM  
Chief Clerk



OFFICES  
848 NORTH HOWARD STREET  
Baltimore, Maryland

HONORABLE HERBERT R. O'CONOR,  
*Governor of Maryland,*  
Annapolis, Maryland.

Dear Governor O'Conor:

In compliance with the provisions of Section 9 of Chapter 390 of the Acts of 1922 of the General Assembly of Maryland, the Maryland State Board of Motion Picture Censors hereby submits its Twenty-Seventh Annual Report.

In order to conform to the fiscal year established by the General Assembly of Maryland, Acts of 1943, the report is limited to the work of this department from October 1, 1942, to June 30, 1943.

### **General Statement**

Members of the Board are in attendance daily at its headquarters, 848 North Howard Street, Baltimore, Maryland, to review motion pictures and supervise the staff of the department. A meeting is held each week to consider administrative matters, and the deliberations and actions of the Board are recorded in its minutes.

During the period above indicated, the Board reviewed 1,524 original motion picture films and licensed 11,299 duplicate prints of films. Of these films, 423 were original features and 1,106 original short subjects, newsreels and cartoons. No films were rejected in toto, but 131 were subjected to eliminations on statutory grounds. The number of foreign made films submitted for review and licensing during this period was 31, which was 15 less than during the previous year. In the consideration of these foreign films, the Board was ably assisted by the Foreign Language Committee, composed of members of the faculty of Johns Hopkins University and Goucher College. The number of original prints of "soundies" submitted for review was 88, and 160 duplicate prints of such pictures were licensed.

### **Receipts and Disbursements**

The great decrease in production in the motion picture industry for commercial purposes has naturally been reflected in the receipts of this department. The total receipts during the period for which this report is made were \$39,828.00. The expenditures,

representing the cost of operations, were \$22,578.29, and the amount returned to the Treasury of the State as net revenue was \$17,249.71. Comparison with figures of the preceding year can be made on a proportionate basis only, since the period covered by this report comprises but nine months. Nevertheless, it will be found that even on a proportionate basis, the receipts are approximately \$2,000.00 less than those recorded for the preceding year. It is interesting to note, however, that this department has been a source of considerable revenue to the State. Since 1921, \$272,514.11 has been paid into the Treasury from its receipts.

### Work of the Board

The eliminations ordered in 131 films, comprised a total of 210 cuts of scenes, sub-titles or dialogues; the statutory reasons for these eliminations were classed as follows:

Inhuman, tending to corrupt morals or incite to crime..	72
Indecent and immoral and tending to corrupt morals or incite to crime.....	56
Inhuman. ....	3

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Total..... 131

When an elimination from or disapproval of a film or view is ordered by the Board, the person submitting such film or view for examination receives immediate notice of the order of elimination or disapproval; if an appeal is taken, the film or view is promptly re-examined in the presence of the applicant, by two or more members of the Board, and finally approved or disapproved with the right of appeal to the Baltimore City Court. However, it is pleasing to state that the applicants for licenses of the pictures in which eliminations were made were satisfied to revise the films to meet the requirements of the Board and no redress to the Court was sought.

In fact, the cooperation and respect accorded the Board by the representatives of the industry and the officials of the motion picture theatres is most gratifying, and such courtesy is appreciated.

Fewer eliminations were ordered during the period upon which this report is based by reason of the subject matter used. Many pictures are documentary and many are tributes to various branches of the armed services in their victorious campaigns in the present global war. Obviously, such films are unlikely to

contain material to which statutory objections can justly be made. We have noted, however, many scenes showing the cruelty and brutality of the enemy to which we would have taken exception in normal times. Nevertheless, being cognizant of the necessity of conditioning a civilian population to war, we have not ordered eliminations in many such instances.

The national necessity of granting priority to manpower and materials for military purposes at this time has caused a great reduction, not only in film production, but in every branch of the industry as well. Fewer "soundies" have been submitted for review due to the curtailment of manufacture and lack of required mechanical service. This type of motion picture production is rather new and the number of machines is limited.

The work of the Board is not confined to the review of films, as all dialogues submitted with the applications for licenses must be read as a precaution against the inclusion of offensive and objectionable remarks. Practically all reels are examined within twenty-four hours after their delivery to the office of the Board, and with such prompt reviews constant attention to the work is required.

### **Personnel**

The Board enjoys unusual congeniality among its members and splendid cooperation from the employees of the department, factors which aid in a successful administration.

The film examiners and measurers receive the films and record therefrom all necessary information. This record is transmitted to the clerical department, where fees are collected and further data pertinent to the films is added. The projectionists screen the films for review by the Board. A reviewer assists the Board in this work and also checks dialogues and procures desired information with respect to each subject.

Censorship and the promulgation of rules and regulations would be useless without proper enforcement. The inspection staff of the department visits theatres throughout the State to insure compliance with the orders of the Board as to eliminations and to see that all legal requirements in licensing and advertising by exhibitors are observed. The inspectors promptly report the result of their investigations and all violations receive the immediate attention of the Board. However, the cooperation of the operators appears to have been secured and the number of violations has been materially reduced.

The law enforcement officers of the State have been helpful to the Board and its inspectors, a relationship which has proved to be most satisfactory.

### **Censorship**

In our highly regulated society today, restrictions have become commonplace and resentment towards intelligent censorship is fast disappearing. Through the suggestions of censor boards and censor organizations, such as the National Board of Review, Hays' organization, National Legion of Decency and others, all of which deserve the greatest commendation, the industry admits that it has enjoyed increased profits since its products have become acceptable to ever increasing groups.

We stand in a somewhat comparable relation to children's recreational programs, that the school stands to child training programs. Our responsibilities become, as we see it, greater in a war period, as the employment of parents in war industries or their participation in patriotic organizations in the furtherance of the war effort has increased. The parental supervision is not as constant and children of such parents attend the motion picture theatres in greater numbers.

The Board observed some attempt on the part of the industry to introduce burlesque into the movies. "Lady of Burlesque" is a typical example of such films. Censorship organizations and censorship boards concurred with this Board in ordering eliminations in these subjects and we believe further experiments in this field have been discouraged.

The Board is in hearty accord with the thought that the motion picture theatres should furnish entertainment for every member of the family. From the usual type of pictures presented by the industry, we are happy to conclude that it is the purpose of the industry to place its theatres on such a plane.

### **Observations—Incidental but Pertinent**

The product of the whole motion picture industry passes before the Board and consequently we are in a position to observe certain facts worthy of comment. First and foremost, a high tribute should be paid to the industry for its effective contribution to the war effort. Producers and exhibitors alike have co-operated with every campaign for salvage, for Red Cross funds, and with the war savings stamp and bond drives. They have

reached every community in the United States and the effect upon the ultimate total receipts, while difficult to estimate statistically, is not difficult to appreciate.

Recognition should also be given the industry for its excellent productions featuring the exploits of our armed forces in their campaigns on land, sea and air. The morale of the entire country has been sustained and nourished by these presentations.

Generous, too, has been its contribution to the morale of the armed forces by sending top ranking screen artists on personal appearance tours, bringing cheer and encouragement to men at home and on the fighting fronts. The artists, also, have furthered the program by giving their services without recompense in the production of such pictures as "This Is the Army" and "Stage Door Canteen", the proceeds of which inure directly or indirectly to the armed forces.

Movies are also used as an arm of psychological warfare. As soon as our troops occupy a territory our motion pictures appear in the theatres of that country. These films, of course, are carefully selected by the Office of War Information to expedite the re-establishment of friendly relations. Subjects such as "Sergeant York", "Air Force", "So Proudly We Hail", etc., are featured, with the dialogue in the native tongue.

The use of the film as a means of instruction, both in war industries and in the training of troops for war services, has been estimated as saving approximately forty per cent. of time previously needed. This method has not only effectively speeded up the war effort, but has also demonstrated how much more readily absorbed is visual education than oral. Consequently, in the post-war period, our educational methods will be modernized. Perhaps films will generally be used and text books will supplement them, reversing the current practice.

### **Recommendations**

The Congress of the United States reduced the appropriation allotted to the Office of War Information and the program of such information planned by this agency for distribution through the motion picture theatres has been canceled. Large manufacturing companies engaged entirely now in war production have asserted their willingness to produce such programs upon the condition that the pictures carry a credit line using their name. This method would be a new type of advertising. The ques-

tion of whether certain films should be classified as a commercial or non-commercial is constantly confronting the Board, and the method of production above suggested would make the matter still more controversial. We suggest that Section 22 of the Motion Picture Laws of the State more clearly restrict the type of films or views not subject to the provisions requiring a license for the exhibition of the same.

We further recommend that the time for the submission of the annual report by this Board be changed to conform to the present fiscal year of the State.

A statistical summary of the operations of the Board is attached hereto as a part of this report.

Respectfully submitted,

BENJAMIN HANCE, *Chairman.*

ANNIE E. ELLIOTT, *Vice-Chairman.*

HELEN C. TINGLEY, *Secretary.*

November 1, 1943.



# MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1943

## Receipts

### Fees:

Original Reels—35 MM (3,743,488 feet) ..	\$8,490.00	
(Including 12 trailers, 2,241 feet, \$24)		
Original Reels—16 MM (2,709 feet) .....	16.00	
Original Reels—16 MM—Reversible		
(62,671 feet) .....	352.00	
		\$8,858.00
Duplicate Reels—35 MM (26,126,053 feet)	\$29,599.00	
Duplicate Reels—Reversible—16 MM		
(140,068 feet) .....	320.00	
		29,919.00
Sale of Substitute Seals (1,051) .....	1,051.00	
		\$39,828.00
Deposited to credit of State Treasurer .....		39,828.00

## Expenses

### Salaries:

Board Members .....	\$5,400.00	
Other Employees .....	12,799.87	
		\$18,199.87

### Other Expenses:

Repairs .....	\$45.53	
Light, Heat, Power and Water .....	223.29	
Traveling .....	508.25	
Communication .....	524.17	
Printing .....	35.00	
Contractual, Film Seals, etc. ....	1,827.70	
Office Supplies .....	614.57	
Motion Picture Machine Supplies .....	92.86	
Office Equipment .....	237.85	
Motion Picture Equipment .....	243.57	
Insurance .....	25.63	
		4,378.42
		\$22,578.29

## Budget Account (Per Comptroller)

Appropriation (1943) .....	\$31,769.00	
Refund (Communication, Item 206) .....	4.20	
Refund (Sale of Seal, Item 208) .....	.08	
		\$31,773.28
Less Reversion to Reserve Fund .....	9,194.99	
General Fund Disbursement .....		\$22,578.29

**MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS**  
**TABLE SHOWING TOTAL ANNUAL RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS,**  
**TOGETHER WITH THE AMOUNTS REVERTING TO**  
**THE STATE TREASURY**

**October 1, 1920—June 30, 1943**

	Receipts	Disbursements	Amount Reverting to State Treasury
10-1-20 to 9-30-21.....	\$ 26,488.33	\$ 19,025.26	\$ 7,463.07
10-1-21 to 9-30-22.....	26,866.90	19,842.12	7,024.78
10-1-22 to 9-30-23.....	27,059.51	19,892.93	7,166.58
10-1-23 to 9-30-24.....	26,338.50	20,730.44	5,608.06
10-1-24 to 9-30-25.....	29,249.50	22,207.24	7,042.26
10-1-25 to 9-30-26.....	30,207.92	22,662.82	7,545.10
10-1-26 to 9-30-27.....	32,498.55	24,883.80	7,614.75
10-1-27 to 9-30-28.....	38,165.57	27,734.69	10,430.88
10-1-28 to 9-30-29.....	44,486.27	32,937.76	11,548.51
10-1-29 to 9-30-30.....	38,954.98	31,718.26	7,236.72
10-1-30 to 9-30-31.....	35,245.85	31,816.79	3,429.06
10-1-31 to 9-30-32.....	35,637.44	32,158.81	3,478.63
10-1-32 to 9-30-33.....	35,152.34	34,207.93	944.41
10-1-33 to 9-30-34.....	36,563.00	27,174.49	9,388.51
10-1-34 to 9-30-35.....	39,463.00	27,577.76	11,885.24
10-1-35 to 9-30-36.....	44,073.00	28,927.98	15,145.02
10-1-36 to 9-30-37.....	49,293.00	28,855.10	20,437.90
10-1-37 to 9-30-38.....	48,659.00	30,197.34	18,461.66
10-1-38 to 9-30-39.....	50,180.00	30,302.92	19,877.08
10-1-39 to 9-30-40.....	53,180.00	29,598.72	23,581.28
10-1-40 to 9-30-41.....	55,877.00	30,347.18	25,529.82
10-1-41 to 9-30-42.....	55,561.00	31,135.92	24,425.08
10-1-42 to 6-30-43.....	39,828.00	22,578.29	17,249.71
	<hr/> \$899,028.66	<hr/> \$626,514.55	<hr/> \$272,514.11

# MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS

## REPORT OF FILMS EXAMINED

October 1, 1942 — June 30, 1943

	Films		Reels		No. of Feet		Films Approved	Films		Films Eliminated
	Original	Duplicate	Original	Duplicate	Original	Duplicate		Rejected		
October .....	186	1,405	544	3,834	460,467	3,277,447	1,571	0	20	
November .....	182	1,218	571	3,606	479,537	3,145,425	1,385	0	15	
December .....	169	1,191	518	2,947	435,807	2,677,630	1,349	0	11	
January .....	182	1,284	543	3,511	445,269	2,926,274	1,451	0	15	
February .....	147	1,137	420	2,858	339,565	2,434,294	1,272	0	12	
March .....	181	1,364	598	4,030	501,370	3,349,471	1,521	0	24	
April .....	181	1,343	538	3,884	452,238	3,217,429	1,509	0	15	
May .....	153	1,189	455	3,456	375,120	2,842,066	1,330	0	12	
June .....	148	1,168	388	2,952	319,495	2,396,285	1,309	0	7	
	1,529	11,299	4,575	31,078	3,808,868	26,266,121	12,697	0	131	

**MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS**  
**CLASSIFICATION OF FILMS**  
**October 1, 1942—June 30, 1943**

	Original and Duplicate				Adver- tising	Miscel- laneous
	Dramas	Comedies	News	Cartoons		
October .....	342	325	831	70	2	21
November ...	381	256	681	71	5	6
December ...	302	231	749	54	2	22
January .....	336	248	782	81	3	16
February ....	256	183	733	95	1	16
March .....	386	234	834	67	1	23
April .....	360	214	839	70	0	41
May .....	315	191	739	83	5	9
June .....	248	187	814	57	3	7
	2,926	2,069	7,002	648	22	161

**SUMMARY OF REPORT**

Films, original .....	1,529	.....	.....	.....
Films, duplicate .....	11,299	.....	.....	.....
Reels, original .....	.....	4,575	.....	.....
Reels, duplicate .....	.....	31,078	.....	.....
Number of feet, original.....	.....	.....	3,808,868	.....
Number of feet, duplicate.....	.....	.....	26,266,121	.....
Films approved .....	.....	.....	.....	12,697
Films rejected .....	.....	.....	.....	0
Films eliminated .....	.....	.....	.....	131
	12,828	35,653	30,074,989	12,828